

INFRASTRUCTURE BILL OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE

(Mr. HIMES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HIMES. Madam Speaker, I live in southwestern Connecticut, which is on an artery of this Nation's commerce and economy, and that artery is clogged. I spend hours when I am traveling around my district in traffic or worrying that the trains, which move more slowly than they moved 75 years ago, won't get me to where I need to go.

We have an opportunity in this Chamber, sometime in the next week or so, of passing a major infrastructure bill, which will alleviate those problems in my district and around the United States.

The problems in my district are hardly unique, and it is not just about growth, though every business leader in my district says that transportation infrastructure is their number one or number two problem. It is about quality of life.

This infrastructure bill is perhaps a once-in-a-career opportunity to address and make better the challenges that face each and every one of our constituents.

Madam Speaker, I urge a vote for the infrastructure bill. It is a jobs bill. It is a future economic bill. And, of course, it is going to repair and improve the quality of life for the constituents of everyone in the Chamber.

HOUSE DEMOCRATS DELIVERING FOR THE PEOPLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. STRICKLAND). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. NEGUSE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. NEGUSE. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

Mr. NEGUSE. Madam Speaker, House Democrats are delivering for the people, and let me explain to you how they are doing so.

Under President Biden's leadership, our economy is growing at nearly the fastest rate in over 40 years. The child tax credit is cutting taxes for hard-working middle-class families across the country. And by putting more of working people's own money back into their pockets, it is generating \$20 billion in spending in local economies, supporting local businesses and jobs.

Now, Madam Speaker, we are hard at work to deliver even more for working

families through the Build Back Better plan and the bipartisan infrastructure bill.

But while House Democrats are delivering for the people, unfortunately, some on the other side of the aisle are promoting misinformation about the coronavirus and opposing overwhelmingly popular vaccine mandates that will save lives and keep our schools open. Some of them, Madam Speaker, have even spread false narratives about the attack on our Capitol and on this Chamber nearly 9 months ago.

As *The New York Times* reported earlier this month: "A growing number of Republicans and their media allies have downplayed the riot. Some have begun to treat it as a heroic act."

Madam Speaker, this dangerous rhetoric from Republicans continues as Senate Leader MITCH MCCONNELL now threatens the full faith and credit of the United States, and Senate Republicans refuse to do their job to ensure that America can pay its bills on time.

Let's be clear, Madam Speaker, raising or suspending the debt limit does not authorize new spending. It is about meeting obligations that the government has already made, including the bipartisan COVID relief package passed last year in December and vital payments to Social Security recipients as well.

In fact, much of the debt was accumulated under President Trump. The massive tax giveaways for millionaires and billionaires that Republicans pushed through under President Trump added \$1.8 trillion to the national debt, and a full 97 percent, Madam Speaker, of the total debt subject to the limit was accumulated before President Biden took office.

Madam Speaker, it is no surprise that congressional Republicans voted three times—not once, not twice, but three times—to suspend the debt limit under President Trump.

□ 1700

Leader MCCONNELL and congressional Republicans know what is at stake. In 2019, MITCH MCCONNELL himself said that raising the debt ceiling, and I am going to quote, Madam Speaker, "ensures our Federal Government will not approach any kind of short-term debt crisis in the coming weeks or months. It secures our Nation's full faith and credit and ensures that Congress will not throw this kind of unnecessary wrench into the gears of job growth and a thriving economy."

Not my words, Madam Speaker, MITCH MCCONNELL's words. He said it himself. This is about supporting American jobs and our economy. This is about doing our job for the American people.

We urge Leader MCCONNELL: Stop playing games with the full faith and credit of the United States. Stop playing games with American jobs. Do your job to ensure that America can pay its bills on time by addressing the debt limit.

Now, I think it is important for the American people to understand why we are here standing up for the credit of the United States, and I can think of no one better to help explain precisely that than my good friend, the distinguished gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT).

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. CARTWRIGHT).

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Madam Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman from Colorado for yielding.

It is true. Today, in the Congress, the Treasury Secretary of the United States, Janet Yellen, testified that we will run out of borrowing ability on October 18, next month. What this is, is a pernicious, dangerous threat to the United States of America that is happening right now. A lot of people don't realize it because, as Mr. NEGUSE just mentioned, extending or suspending the debt limit has been a routine, a normal thing for us to do, something that, in the words of Senator MCCONNELL himself, is essential for keeping our economy moving, protecting American jobs, and preserving the livelihoods of many, many Americans.

So the question is, what are we doing? Why do we have to do this? Why do we have to stand here tonight and stand up for the full faith and credit of the United States?

It is because the economy depends on it, not only the economy of America, but the economy of the world depends on the full faith and credit of the United States of America.

Credit is vital to the operation of any economy. Any businessperson knows that. Every businessman, every businesswoman knows that his or her business runs on their credit and their credit rating. They know that credit, every loan, every loan decision, is based on the strength of the promise to repay, and that is what we are talking about here.

If a promise to repay a loan isn't strong, that loan is not made. If the strength of the promise to repay a loan is not there, then either the loan is not made or they have to charge a much higher interest rate to reflect the extra risk in getting repaid. It is all about repaying your loans.

If there is one thing that has been a constant in these United States, and something that we have been really proud of in our Nation for generation after generation, it is that if there is one rock-solid, dependable promise in the world, it is that the United States of America will pay its bills. That is a rock-solid promise, and it is something that reverberates in the world's economies.

That is why we have such a strong economy and a base from which to grow it. That is why we are able to run a government and build bridges and roads, and why we are able to maintain armed services in this country. It is why we are able to function as a nation and as an economy.